

VENONA

~~TOP SECRET~~

W.H.

UNSUB

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5TH REISSUE

JOSEPH BERGER, CONTACT OF "YAZ"; DETAILS, SUGGESTIONS FOR
RECRUITMENT DURING VISIT TO MOSCOW
(1945)

From: NEW YORK

To: MOSCOW

How.: 777-779

25th May 1945

[3-part message complete]

[Part I] To VIKTOR(1).

Joseph BERGER(ii), who is a lead of "YAZ"(i)(iii) and has
already been reported on, has left for SMYRNA(iv) as a member of
the COUNTRY's(STRANA)(v) delegation to the Reparations Commission.
BERGER - 48 years old, [1 group unrecovered], of Russian-Jewish
extraction, married, has

[32 groups unrecoverable]

[Continued overleaf]

3/NBY/T2

VENONA

~~TOP SECRET~~

VENONA

~~TOP SECRET~~

- 2 -

3/NEF/T2

North Washington Boulevard in the city of ARLINGTON, State of VIRGINIA. Formerly he lived for a long while in the city of PROVINCETOWN in an artists' colony organized by the ROOSEVELT Administration during the depression. He took an active part in the collection of funds

[25 groups unrecoverable]

....8[vi] he wrote books for children. In 1943 he worked in the Press Section of the Department of Justice where he was given the job of writing speeches for BIDDLE[vii] and other chiefs. BERGER prepared all the materials on his own initiative, without having them approved by [1 group unrecovered]

[Part II]

In 1944 he took a post in the National Democratic Committee, where, working under HANNEGAN[viii], he wrote speeches for the leaders of the party for the election campaign. HANNEGAN, who is to be appointed Postmaster General, took BERGER on as his special assistant at a salary of ten thousand dollars a year. B.[ii] will take up his duties when he returns from SMYRNA.

YaZ' has known B. [B% about] 3 years and describes him as a very progressive fellow who is well disposed towards us. He has often expressed a desire to live permanently in the U.S.S.R. During the past year [C% he has been maintaining contact] with the FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN[ZEMLYAKI][ix].

Having regard to the position he is to occupy in the future and his connections in the Democratic [B% organisation] B. could become a valuable probationer[STAZHER]. I would recommend using B.'s trip to SMYRNA for working on him and [B% possibly] signing him on. [C% By] obtaining information on the work of the delegates of the COUNTRY you could check for yourselves on the spot his potentialities.

[31 groups unrecovered]

"YaZ'" [2 groups unrecovered] in[x] CARPAGE[KARPAKIN][xi].

[Part III]

[4 groups unrecovered] YaZ' [B% and] his family, work and so on depending on how B. will [5 groups unrecovered] acquaintance in the direction necessary to us. At the meeting[xii] with YaZ' before departure B. insistently inquired [2 groups unrecovered] in SMYRNA acquaintances to whom he wanted to send greetings. If you consider such an alternative[VARIANT] acceptable, upon your request we will communicate a description of YaZ' and his wife and further facts about them, so that there should be no [2 groups unrecovered] attempt on B.'s part to check whether or not our journalists really know YaZ'.

No. 485

25 May 1945

BERGER[xiii]

3/NEF/T2

VENONA

~~TOP SECRET~~

VENONA

~~TOP SECRET~~

- 3 -

3/NEF/T2

Footnotes: [i] VIKTOR: Lt. Gen. P.M. FITIN.

[ii] Joseph BERGER/B.: Joseph Isadore BERGER; nom de plume Jeremiah DIGGES. See also details in NEW YORK's No. 785 of 17th May 1944 (3/NEF/T242).

[iii] YaS': i.e. "IDE"; Simon Samuel KRAFSUR, a TASS employee.

[iv] ZNYEMA: MOSCOW.

[v] COUNTRY: U.S.A.

[vi]B: Probably the 1-st letter of BERGER's nom de plume (see Footnote [ii]).

[vii] BIDDLE: Francis BIDDLE, U.S. Attorney General.

[viii] HANCOCKIAN: Robert E. HANCOCKIAN, elected Chairman of the Democratic National Committee on 22nd January 1944.

[ix] FELLOWCOUNTRYMEN: Members of the Communist Party.

[x] Or "to".

[xi] CARRIAGE: WASHINGTON, D.C.

[xii] Or "meetings".

[xiii] SHERIFF: Vladimir Sergeevich PRAVDIN, Editor of the TASS News Agency in NEW YORK CITY.

3/NEF/T2

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